



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

# SHELLFISH BED RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT



## APPLICATION SUMMARY: THE 2017 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

is a continuous sign-up.  
Applications will be evaluated  
as funding becomes available  
in 2017.

**APPLICATION  
EVALUATION  
PERIOD(S) END:**  
**February 17, 2017**  
**April 21, 2017**

## WHO MAY APPLY:

Shellfish producers and tribes  
within the Puget Sound and  
Willapa Bay area that own or  
lease shellfish beds.

**FIND OUT MORE AT:**  
[www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov)

## THE USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) WORKS TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES ON OUR NATION'S PRIVATE LANDS.

Financial and technical assistance is available from NRCS through the **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** for individual producer contracts to help restore Olympia Oysters. EQIP funding will help pay for the shell substrate essential for the Olympia Oysters to grow upon as well as seeded cultch bags.

The Olympia Oyster (*Ostrea lurida*), native name of Kloch Kloch, is the only native oyster in Washington. Once believed to have encompassed 10,000-20,000 acres in Puget Sound alone, this keystone species is struggling. Historically the Olympia Oyster was a major food source for native people for thousands of years. The oyster was first commercially harvested around 1850 and shipped to the California gold fields. The industry continued to grow until around 1881 when the harvest began to decline. Since the Olympia Oyster was harvested only from wild stock, the high demand spurred an unsustainable harvest rate. By the 1890 steps were being taken to start farming the oysters. Farming the native oyster was often problematic and over time in the 1920s the Japanese oyster was brought in for farming.

Pollution and over harvesting has continued to take its toll on the Olympia Oyster. Today with less than five percent of the historic range of this species producing native oysters, an effort is mounting to restore the Olympia Oyster. This keystone species is an important for crabs, juvenile salmon, and small marine life that thrive within the oyster beds.

**If you are interested in learning more about the native oyster and applying for the 2017 EQIP Shellfish practice, please call your local NRCS field office or visit us online for more information.**

OFFICE LOCATION	PHONE #
Lake Stevens	(425) 334-2828
Lynden	(360) 354-5658
Montesano	(360) 249-5900
Mt. Vernon	(360) 428-7684
Olympia	(360) 704-7740
Port Angeles	(360) 452-8994
Port Orchard	(360) 876-2115
Puyallup	(253) 845-9272
South Bend	(360) 875-6300
Renton	(425) 277-5580, ext. 101